UNITED
NATIONS

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Secretariat

ST/AI/378
22 October 1992

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY FOR THE CLASSIFICATION OF POSTS IN THE GENERAL SERVICE AND RELATED CATEGORIES AT VIENNA*

1. The purpose of the present administrative instruction is to confirm that the authority for the classification of posts in the General Service and related categories at Vienna has been delegated to the Director-General, United Nations Office at Vienna, with the following restrictions:

(a) The initial classification of all posts in the General Service and related categories at Vienna will be subject to final approval by the Office of Human Resources Management;

(b) The authority for classification of posts proposed for reclassification at the highest level of the General Service category and those proposed for reclassification to the Professional category will remain with the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management.

2. In Director-General's Bulletin UNOV/DGB.5 dated 1 December 1989, and UNOV information circulars UN/INF.240 dated 30 January 1990, UN/INF.240/Add.1 dated 10 December 1991, UN/INF.240/Add.2 dated 11 December 1991, UN/INF.240/Add.3 dated 13 December 1991 and UN/INF.240/Add.4 dated 6 March 1991, staff at Vienna were informed of the implementation of common classification standards for posts in the General Service and Manual Worker categories at Vienna, of the classification system and of established procedures for implementation of and appeals against classification decisions.

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* Personnel Manual, index No. 2180.

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UNITED NATIONS

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Secretariat

ST/AI/379
29 October 1992

ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION

To: Members of the staff

From: The Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management

Subject: PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH SEXUAL HARASSMENT*

1. The purpose of the present instruction is to inform staff members of the procedures which have been established for dealing with incidents of sexual harassment. The Organization's policy regarding this unacceptable behaviour is set out in ST/SGB/253.

2. Sexual harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favours or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when it interferes with work, is made a condition of employment or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment. It is particularly serious when behaviour of this kind is engaged in by any official who is in a position to influence the career or employment conditions (including hiring, assignment, contract renewal, performance evaluation or promotion) of the recipient of such attentions.

3. Individuals who believe that they are being harassed are encouraged to notify the offender that his or her behaviour is unwelcome. However, the Organization recognizes that power or status disparities or other considerations may make direct confrontation difficult. In such a case, the individual is encouraged to discuss the matter with a colleague or friend as soon as possible and may report the incident to one of the staff members referred to in paragraphs 5 and 6 below.

4. The aggrieved individual is encouraged to keep a written record of events, as soon as possible after the incident or incidents have occurred, noting dates, places, a short description of what happened and the names of any witnesses and of anyone to whom the incident might have been mentioned.

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* Personnel Manual index No. 1166.

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Informal approach

5. In many cases, the situation can be resolved informally. It will often be helpful to seek advice from a colleague. As a next step, an aggrieved individual may wish to consult the Staff Counsellor at his or her duty station. Staff members are reminded that the Staff Counsellor's mandate is to provide advice and help on a strictly confidential basis. At duty stations where there is neither a Staff Counsellor nor a staff member designated to fulfil the functions of a Staff Counsellor, the aggrieved individual may communicate with the Staff Counsellor at Headquarters or other duty stations. Advice and help may also be sought from a member of the Panel of Counsel, a member of the Panel on Discrimination and Other Grievances, staff representatives, members of the Staff Committee or its equivalent, a Focal Point for Women and a member of a Group on Equal Rights for Women.

6. The aggrieved individual may also seek advice and help from his or her Personnel Officer, or from a senior member of the department or office, who is in a position to discuss the matter discreetly with the individual and with the alleged harasser with a view to achieving an informal resolution of the problem, where appropriate.

7. All reports of sexual harassment will be handled discreetly to protect the privacy of all involved. However, staff members should be aware that incidents which may constitute misconduct will be reported by the officials listed in paragraph 6 to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management. Should this happen, the aggrieved staff member will be so informed in writing as soon as possible.

Formal procedures

8. In circumstances where informal resolution is not appropriate or has been unsuccessful, the individual may make a written complaint to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management. The complaint should describe the specific act or acts which are being objected to, the time, location and circumstances under which they took place, and include any other information and evidence relevant to the matter. The complaint should identify the alleged harasser, any witnesses and anyone to whom the incident might have been mentioned. It should be dated and signed by the complainant.

9. Upon receipt of a complaint from the aggrieved staff member pursuant to paragraph 8, or upon receipt of a report of sexual harassment from an appropriate official pursuant to paragraph 7, the Office of Human Resources Management will promptly conduct at Headquarters the initial investigation and fact-finding provided for in administrative instruction ST/AI/371 on revised disciplinary measures and procedures. At all other duty stations, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management shall designate an official who will conduct the initial investigation and fact-finding and report directly to him or her.

10. The alleged offender shall receive a copy of the complaint submitted in accordance with paragraph 8 above, or a written version of the report submitted to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management under paragraph 7. He or she shall be given an opportunity to answer the allegations in writing and to produce evidence to the contrary. At the same time, he or she shall be informed of his or her right to the advice of another staff member or retired staff member to assist in his or her response. If no response is submitted, the matter shall nevertheless proceed.

11. After completion of the initial investigation and fact-finding, the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management shall, in accordance with paragraph 8 of ST/AI/371, proceed as follows:

(a) Should the facts as a result of the initial investigation not appear to indicate that misconduct has occurred, decide that the case should be closed; or

(b) Should the facts appear to indicate that misconduct has occurred, refer the matter to a joint disciplinary committee for advice; or

(c) Should the evidence clearly indicate that misconduct has occurred and that the seriousness of the misconduct warrants immediate separation from service, recommend to the Secretary-General that the alleged harasser be summarily dismissed.

12. The alleged harasser and the aggrieved individual shall be informed promptly of the course of action decided upon by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management.